THE SPEECH

OF HIS

HIGHNESSE

THE

LORD PROTECTOR

TO THE

PARLIAMENT

IN

The Painted Chamber at Westminster, on Munday last, being the fourth of this instant *September*, 1654.

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An excellent Speech of His Highneſs the Lord Protector, deliver'd to the Parliament on Munday laſt in the Painted Chamber.

ON Munday laſt about 9 of the clock in the forenoon, his Highneſs the Lord Protector rode in his Coach to the Abbey Church in very ſtately equipage, the Gentlemen of his Highneſs going bare before, richly habited, and next before the Coach the Pages and Lacqueys, (in their ſeveral Liveries, moſt admirable to behold) on the one ſide of the Coach was Mr *Strickland*, one of his Highneſs Council, & Captain of his Guard of Foot; on the other ſide, Mr *Howard* Capt. of the Life-guard of Horſe, both of them bare, went on foot. In the Coach with his Highneſs was the Lord *Henry*, his ſon, Maj. Gen. *Lambert*, and the Lord Preſident *Lawrence*, both rid bare, the Maj. Gen. in the end of the Coach againſt his Highneſs, & the Lord Preſident in the right boot. After his Highneſs Coach rid Mr *Claypool*, Mr of the Horſe, and with him his Highneſs led Horſe, very rich, the cloth of covering coſting 500 l. Next came the Lord Commiſſioners of the Seal, and Col. *Sydenham*, and Col. *Montague*, Commiſſioners of the Exchequer. Then the Gentlemen of his Highneſs Foot Guard, and the Wardens of the Tower, all in his Highneſs Livery, went along about his Highneſs Coach. His Highnes alighting at the Abbey-dore, the Officers of the Army, and the Gentlemen went firſt in; after them 4 Maces, next them the Lord Commiſſioners of the Seal the L. *Whitlock* carrying the purſe. After them, the L. *Lambert*, carrying the Sword, bare, before his Highneſs. The reſt followed, and his Highneſs was ſeated over againſt the Pulpit. After the Sermon was don (which was preached by Mr *Th. Goodwin*) his Highneſs went on foot, in the ſame equipage, to the Painted Chamber, there being a very rich Chair wrought and trimmed with Gold, upon a place up two ſteps, like a Throne, with a Table before it, and ſeats for the members, and his Highneſs ſtanding by with his head bare, deliver'd his mind very excellently at large to the Parliament. The ſubſtance whereof was as followeth.

THat the Parliament then met, was ſuch a Congregation as *England* never ſaw, having on their ſhoulders the intereſt of three great Nations, with the Territories thereunto belonging; Yea, that they had upon their ſhoulders the intereſt of all the Chriſtian people in the world. He

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He promiſed in what he ſhould ſay, plainneſs and truth; taking notice, That after ſo many changes and turnings as this Nation hath laboured under, to have ſuch a day of hope, and ſuch a door of hope opened as this, was ſome months ſince above all our thoughts. That it might have been a matter worthy ſuch a meeting, to have remembred them what occaſioned the riſe and firſt beginning of all the toſſings that have been upon theſe Nations, and to have given a *ſeries* not of the *tranſactions of men*, but of the *providences of God* all along to theſe Times, and the grounds of the firſt undertaking to oppoſe that Uſurpation and Tyrannie which was upon Us in our Civils and Spirituals: but ſome Reaſons diverted him from that; As,

1 *To have proceeded after that manner would have taken up the whole day; for Gods diſpenſations have been ſuch, that, as* David *ſayes in another caſe,* If I ſhould ſit to count them, they are more then can be numbred.

2 *Becauſe the recapitulation of his providences had been largely and wiſely held forth in the Sermon that day, in an alluſion to the ſtate of, and diſpenſations toward the Iſraelites (the onely parallel to Gods dealing with us, that he knew in the world). in bringing them out of Egypt through a wilderneſſe, towards their place of reſt.*

3 *Becauſe the end of that meeting was healing, and the remembring of former tranſactions particularly might ſet the wounds freſh a bleeding; and if this day proves not a day of healing what ſhall we do? but if it be the mind of God (which alone muſt make it healing) to put it into their hearts, then it would be ſuch a day as Generations to come would bleſſe them for it.*

That it was neceſſary rather to let them know in what condition theſe Nations were when this Government was erected, what were the breaches in our Civils and Spirituals, when every mans hand (at leaſt his heart) was againſt another, little appeared tending to cementing.

All Gods diſpenſations, neither his terrible ones, when He met us in a way of judgment in a ten years civil war, and a ſharp one, nor his merciful diſpenſations did work upon us. That we had our Humors and Intereſts, and (as He feared) our Humors were more then our Intereſts; our paſſions more then our judgments. Was not every thing almoſt grown arbytrary? What face was upon our affairs as to the intereſt and authority of the Magiſtrate, or to the rights & orders of men, whereby diſtinctions have been made for hundreds of yeares of a *Nobleman*, a *Gentleman*, a *Yeoman*; it being a good intereſt of the Nation, and a great one? Every mans hand was upon his loins, and ſaid, *We ſee nothing that bears ſway or rule.*

And that ſpirit that brought under that contempt, though it may be comprehended in a very ſhort expreſſion of *Men of levelling Principles*, yet the thing had a vaſt extenſion, tending to reduce al the orders and ranks of men to an equality to make the Tenant of as liberal a fortune as his Landlord.

His Highneſſe took notice in the next place of the prodigious contempt upon God and Chriſt, and his Ordinances; a ſpirit viſibly acting thoſe things wch

were fore-told by *Peter* and *Jude*, and *Timothy*, as the lot and portion of the laſt times, and ſomthing worſe then the Antichriſtian ſtate; that there ſhould be perillous dayes, and therefore perillous becauſe they ſhould break all Rules, and labour to root out that remainder of the image of God which was left in the nature of fallen man: And this by men that ſhould have a form of godlineſſe, denying the power of it. And indeed the character whereby that ſpirit and principle is deſcribed, is ſo legible and viſible, that he that runs may read it: And he wiſhed that it were not to be read or ſeen, and that the grace of GOD might not be turn'd into wantonneſſe, and Chriſt and the Spirit of God made a cloak of vile practiſes.

He obſerved, That many would not own theſe things, yet they could tell you, the Magiſtrat hath nothing to do with matters of Conſcience or Religion; That he is to look to the outer man, not to meddle with the inner. And ſuch pretenſions he ſaid there were of liberty of the Subject, and of Conſcience (two as glorious things, and as much to be contended for, as any gift God hath given us.) That both theſe were brought in to patronize ſuch evils. Inſomuch, that it was affirmed, not to be in the power of the Magiſtrate ſo much as to print Bibles, leſt it ſhould ſeem an impoſition on the Conſciences of men, to receive them from the Magiſtrate, as true.

And theſe abominations ſwelled to that height, that the Ax was laid to the Root of the Miniſtry, as *Antichriſtian* and *Babyloniſh*. And as the extremity was great before, that no man, though well approved, and having a good teſtimony might preach, if not ordained, ſo now on the other hand, they would have Ordination put a nullity upon the Calling. He took notice of another evil that had more reſi nedneſſe in it, more colour for it, and had deceived more people of integrity then the former; for few were catcht with the former miſtakes, but ſuch as apoſtatized from their holy profeſſion, ſuch as having been corrupted in their Conſciences, have been forſaken by God, and left to noyſome opinions. But there was another thing that deceived many well-meaning people, whoſe hearts are ſincere, and ſuch (as he was perſwaded) belong to God, and that is the

Fifth Monarchie,

Mens pretending to more ſpirituality then any other. It is a Notion, which (as he hoped) we all honour and wait for, That *Jeſus Chriſt* will have his time to ſet up his reign in our hearts, and to ſubdue that corruption and luſt which reigns more in the world now than ever; and he hoped in due time, it ſhall be; But for men to entitle themſelves to be the onely men to govern Nations, and rule Kingdoms, and give Laws to the world, to determine of property and liberty, and every thing elſe, needs a great manifeſtation of Gods preſence before wiſe men will ſubmit to it.

Many

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Many of those he conceived in his very soul had good meanings, and he hoped this *Parliament* would (as *Jude* sayes, reckoning up the abominable Apostacies of the last times) pluck some out of the fire, and save others with fear, making the rest peaceable Spirits, the subject of their encouragement, and saving others by that discipline that God hath ordained to reform miscarriages. The danger of that Spirit being not in the notion, but in its proceeding to a civill transgression. When men shall come into such a practice, as to tell us, *That liberty and property are not the badges of that Kingdom; and that in stead of regulating Lawes, Laws must be subverted, and perhaps the Judicial Law imposed, or some fancy in stead of it (for that was good and honourable in the Institution, though now by some misapplyed) specially when every stone is turned to bring in Confusion.* This will be a consideration worthy of the Magistrate.

His Highness proceeded to shew, *That while these things were in the midst of us, and the Nation rent and torn from one end to another, Family against Family, Parent against Child, and nothing in the hearts and minds of men, but Oppression, subversion, a Scripture very much abused, and challenged by all men of disinterested spirits.* The common enemy in the mean time sleeps not; swarms of Jesuites coming over, having their Consistories abroad to rule all the affairs of *England*, and the dependancies thereof. In the mean time visible endeavors [illegible] under the work in *Ireland*, to obstruct the work in *Scotland*; Correspondencies and Intelligencies are held to incourage & foment the war in these places. [illegible] all we were deeply ingaged in a war with *Portugal*, whereby our Trade [illegible]; and not only so, but a war with *Holland*, which consumed our Treasure as much as the Assessment came to.

At the same time we fell into a war with *France*, or rather we were in it, and all this fomented by the divisions amongst us, which begat a confidence we could not hold out long; and the calculation had not been ill, if the Lord had not been gracious to us & his people, strangers increased in the Manufacture, the staple commodity of this Nation. In such a heap of confusion was this poor Nation, and that it might not sink into a confusion, from these premises a Remedy must be applyed.

A Remedy hath been applyed: *This Government, a thing that is seen, and read of all; and which, let men say what they will (he could speak with comfort before a Greater then they all, as to his own intention, and let men judge out of the thing it self)* is calculated for the interest of the people, for their interest alone, and for their good, without respect had to any other interest. He added, That he might with humbleness towards God, and modesty before them, say something in behalf of it.

It hath endeavoured to reform the Laws, and for that end hath joyned persons (without reflection upon any) of as great ability and integrity as any other, to consider how the laws might be made plain, short, and cheap, which may in due time be tendered.

It hath taken care to put into seats of Justice, men of the most known integrity and abi-

lity. The Chancery hath been reformed, and (I hope) to the just satisfaction of all good men. It hath put a stop to that heady way, for every man that will, to make himself a Preacher, having endeavoured to settle a way for approbation of men of piety, and fitnesse for the work, and the businesse committed to trusty persons both of the Presbyterian and Independent Judgment, men of as known ability and integrity, as (we suppose) any the Nation hath, and (we believe) have laboured to approve themselves to God and their own Consciences, in approving men to that great Function.

It hath taken care to expunge men unfit for that work, who have been the common scorn and reproach of that Administration. ——— One thing more, It hath been instrumental to call a free Parliament; blessed be God we see here this day a free Parliament; and that it may continue so, he hopes is in the heart of every good man of *England*; and he added, That for his own part, as he had desired it above his life, so to keep it free, he should value it above his life.

Having thus instanced in the wars wherein we were plunged, and the little assurance from Neighbours abroad, he proceeded to shew that a Peace is made with *Sweden* (wherein an honourable person was instrumental) it being of much importance to have a good understanding with our Protestant Neighbours. A peace is also made with the *Dane*, and a peace there that is honourable, and to [illegible] satisfaction of the Merchants.

The [illegible] is open to us, from whence as from a Fountain, our Naval provisions are [illegible].

That a [illegible] is made with the ~~*Dutch* (which is so well known in the consequences of~~

He set forth the advantage of a good Understanding with Protestant States. And he begged, *That it might be in the Parliaments hearts to be zealous of the Protestant Interest abroad, which if ever it be like to come under a condition of suffering, it is now, many of them being banished and driven to seek refuge among strangers. That a peace is made with Portugal (though it be long) of great concernment to Trade; and the people that trade thither, have freedom to enjoy their Consciences, without being subjected to the bloody Inquisition. And that a Treaty with France is now depending.*

His Highnesse then further declared, That it might be necessary for them to hear a little of the Sea affairs, & took notice of the great expence of the forces and fleet, and yet 30000 *Li.* now abated of the next three months assessment. And having spoken about an hour and half, his Highness drew to a conclusion, presenting them with this Observation, That the things before-mentioned are but entrances and doors of hope; That they are brought to the edge of *Canaan* (into which many that have gone before could not enter) That if the blessing and presence of God go along with them in management of their Affaires, He makes no question but he will inable them to lay the top-stone of this Work. He then remembred them, that they have a great work upon them; *Ireland* to look to; that the beginnings of that Government may be setled in terms of honour,

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nôte, That they had before them the consideration of those forrein States that as yet peace is not made with, who if they shall see we manage not our Affaires with prudence as becom s men, will retain hopes that we may sink under the disadvantages thereof, and break into confusion. He perswaded th m o have a sweet, gracious, and holy understanding one of another, and put them in mind of the councel heard that day in order thereunto. And desired them for a conclusion, to believe that He spake not to them as one that would be a Lord over them, but as one that was resolved to be a fellow-servant with them, to the Interest of this great Affair; and so wished them to repair to their House, and exercise their own liberty in the choice of their Speaker. His Highness having done, the Members went to their House, and having chose Mr *Lenthal* Speaker, they ordered a Fast to be kept by them, and in London, and parts adjacent on the 13 of this instant *Septemb.* In all other parts of *England*, *Scotland*, & *Wales*, on the 4 of *Octob.* And in *Ireland* the 1 of *Novemb.* to seek to God for direction and counsel, and to pray for a blessing upon their endeavors.

After which, his Highnesse retired into the place, formerly called the House of Lords, and so took Barge, and went down to White-Hall by water.

The End.

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